



Self-Guided Auto Tour



The City of Richmond and the National Park Service are glad you visited your Park. Our mission is to tell America's stories through the places where they occurred.

If you have stories of America's WWII Home Front, or have documents, objects or other materials about the period, we hope you will join us in preserving them for future generations. We would be glad to accept your items and stories and make them a permanent part of the collection of this National Park.

You can contact us by writing:

Superintendent, Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park
1401 Marina Way South
Richmond, CA 94804

You can call the park at 510 232-5050.

Please visit our website at www.nps.gov/rori to find out the latest information on the Park and how to participate in our upcoming planning processes.

How to get to Interstate 580 freeway from sites in the park:

From the Red Oak Victory

- ★ Drive up Dornan and through the tunnel. Dornan becomes Garrard after the tunnel.
- ★ Turn right onto Cutting Blvd.
- ★ Turn left onto Canal Street.
- ★ Get in the right lane for 580 West and the left lane for 580 East.

From the Rosie Memorial

- ★ Leave Marina Bay Park via Melville and turn right onto Regatta Way.
- ★ Turn left onto Marina Bay Parkway.
- ★ Stay on Marina Way Parkway and you will reach the on-ramps for 580. For 580 West, get in the right lane and enter the freeway. For 580 East, cross over the freeway and stay in right lane.

From the Visitor Center

- ★ Exit the parking lot by turning left onto Marina Way.
- ★ Make the first left onto Hall Avenue.
- ★ At the end of Hall, turn right onto Harbor Way and go about 1 mile to the 580 West and East on ramps.

To Reach the Visitor Center from 580:

Going West on 580

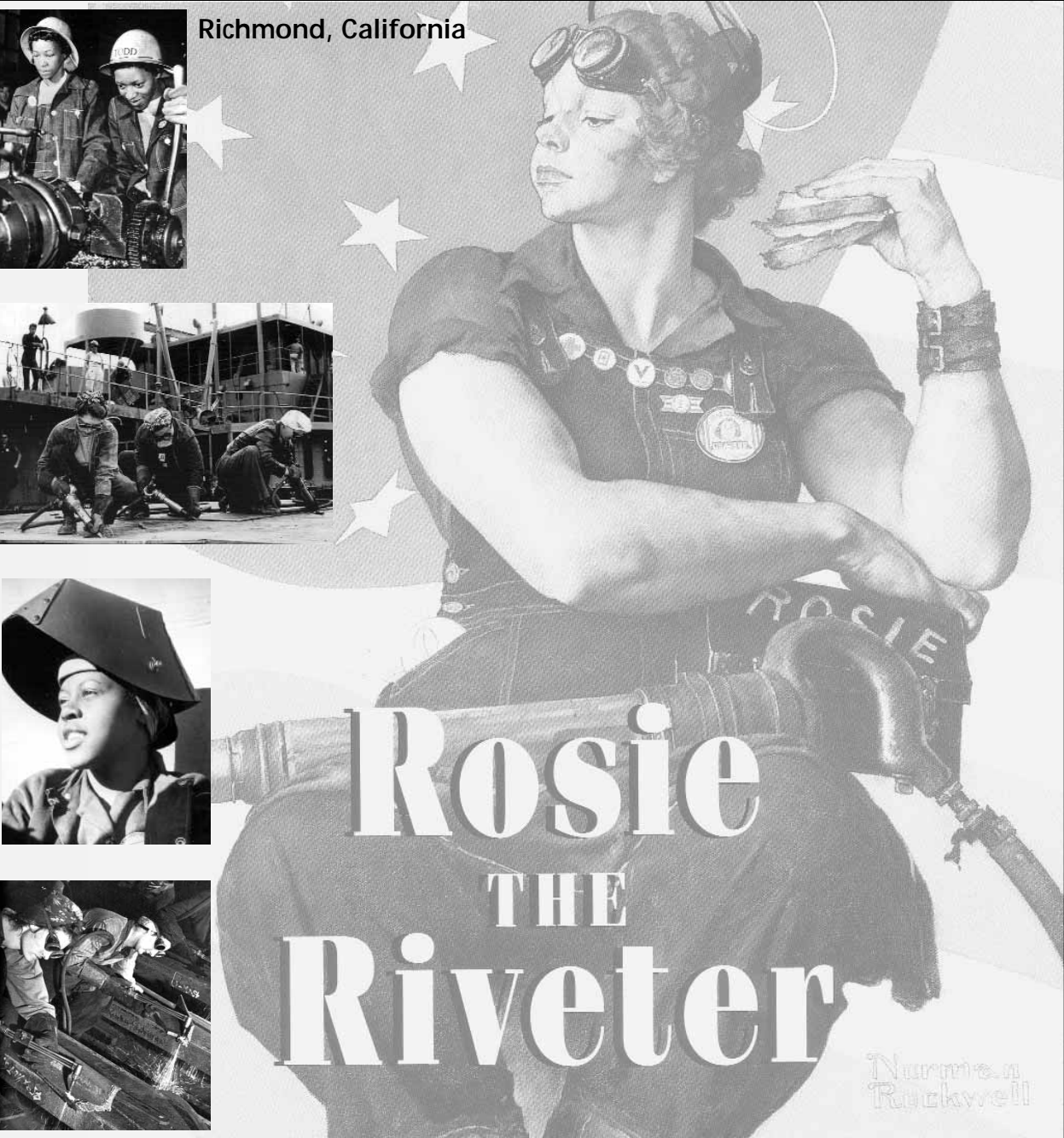
- ★ Take the Harbor Way North exit.
- ★ At the end of the off ramp, turn right onto Cutting Blvd.
- ★ Turn right onto Marina Way South.
- ★ Look for the signs reading Richmond City Hall South and turn into the parking lot. The Visitor Center is located in the main lobby of Richmond City Hall South.

Going East on 580

- ★ Take the Harbor Way South exit, go straight across Cutting Blvd and the street will become Hoffman Avenue.
- ★ Turn right onto Harbor Way South.
- ★ Go about one mile and turn left onto Hall Avenue.
- ★ Turn right onto Marina Way South.
- ★ Look for the signs reading Richmond City Hall South and turn into the parking lot. The Visitor Center is located in the main lobby of Richmond City Hall South.

Front cover photo credits: Norman Rockwell image of Rosie the Riveter provided by Curtis Publishing, Operating a bolt cutting machine, Library of Congress; Chippers at work, National Archives; Richmond Shipyard welder, Oakland Museum of CA -- Dorothea Lange Collection; Women cutters at work, Detroit Historical Museum -- Margaret Bourke-White

Auto Tour concept by Rick Smith, RORI; layout by Jean de los Reyes, PGSO; map by Barbara Butler, PGSO





Welcome to one of America's newest National Parks! In partnership with the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County and numerous others, we are excited to share the stories of the American WWII Home Front. The structures and sites that make up Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park are important touchstones for those stories. The stories of women and minorities in the work force; the advent of day care and pre-paid medical care; changes in national demographics and impacts on America's urban and rural environments are all stories to be heard in the buildings and sites of this National Park in Richmond, California.

The Park is in its early planning stages, but several sites in the Park are available to you now. We plan to open other sites as the Park develops. Enjoy your driving tour!

Judy Hart

Park Superintendent

SAFETY AND WEATHER/COMFORT TIPS

Many of the park sites are located in industrial areas, so keep your eyes open for big trucks, trains and other equipment. Walk and drive defensively.

Climate can vary from mild and warm to windy and chilly at any time of the year. The Bay Area is known for its microclimates which can change dramatically. Visitors should bring layers including a wind jacket. Wear sensible, sturdy walking shoes.

The only full service restrooms available are at the Richmond City Hall South Visitor Center and at local business establishments. Portable toilets are located at Rosie the Riveter Memorial in Marina Bay Park and on board the Red Oak Victory Ship.

The park sites and the areas around them are accessible for wheelchairs, except the Red Oak Victory Ship. A steep gangway leads from the dock to the deck of the ship.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide begins at the Park's Visitor Center located in Richmond City Hall South at 1401 Marina Way. Each page has the directions from your current location to the next location. If you get lost, refer to the center map. None of the sites are more than a few miles from each other.

The pictures in the guide offer a past and present view of the places you are visiting. Information about each site accompanies the pictures.

The self-guided tour should take you from one hour to four hours to complete depending on the pace you set and if you take a tour of the Red Oak Victory Ship.

On your map you will note that the national park includes Barbara and Jay Vincent Park and Lucretia Edwards Park. Visiting these sites will add about a half hour to your visit.

Enjoy your visit and let's get started!

THE PARK'S STORIES

The World War II Home Front is a significant chapter in America's history. Fully engaged in winning World War II, American women, minorities, and men worked toward a common goal in a manner unequalled since. The victory of WWII could not have occurred without them. Women affectionately known as "Rosies" changed America.



Richmond, California played a significant and nationally recognized part in the World War II Home Front. Richmond was home to 56 different war industries, more than any other city of its size in the United States. The city grew nearly overnight from 24,000 people to 100,000 people, overwhelming the available housing stock, roads, schools, businesses and community services.

"Common Purpose/Disparate Experience" - The United States of America had a common purpose during World War II - winning the war. But the experience of that purpose was not the same for all. Saying the nation was "united" is incorrect. Gender and racial discrimination continued to exist and caused unrest and major inequities. The park stories will relate how the nation came together to help defeat a great darkness, but continued to have shadows of its own while doing so.

"Shedding Light on America's Promise" - The promise of our nation's founding documents-the promise of liberty and justice for all- increasingly saw the light of day. While America spent its lifeblood in defeating tyranny overseas, it increasingly dealt with its own hypocrisy at home. New opportunities for women and minorities were created. Positive steps were taken in the areas of equality.

"The Home Front and Total War" - For the first time in America's history, the entire nation was mobilized to achieve a common purpose-victory. In no other American war, before or since, had society been organized to such an extent. "Total War" resulted in the government reaching into and regulating the nation's everyday life and culture. "Total War" resulted in tremendous changes to American government, industry, society, and culture.

"America Today - the Home Front Legacy" - Many elements of today's society are the legacy of the World War II home front effort: pre-paid medical care, public supported child care, major demographic shifts and the resulting impact on the urban and rural America.

American family structure, the role of women and minorities in society, the struggles of the labor and the civil rights movement should play a significant role in discussions of the impacts of the Home Front on our country.



Oakland Museum, Dorothea Lange Collection



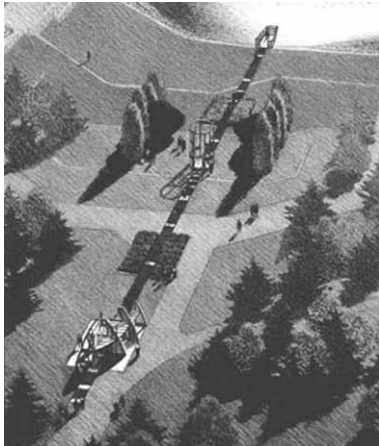
Richard Sturlock, Schomburg Center Collection

The Rosie the Riveter Memorial

commemorates the hundreds of thousands of women who worked to ensure victory in World War II

DIRECTIONS:

- ☆ Exit the City Hall parking lot, turning left onto Marina Way.
- ☆ Go 1/3 of a mile and turn right onto Regatta Blvd.
- ☆ Go 1/2 mile and at the stop sign turn right onto Melville (on the other side of Regatta, Melville is called Seadrift). This will take you into the parking lot of Marina Bay Park, the home of the Rosie Memorial.
- ☆ Plan to spend at least thirty minutes here absorbing this evocative and educational art piece.



Rosie the Riveter Memorial design by: Cheryl Barton and Susan Schwartzberg

Artist's conception of the memorial by Christopher Grubbs



Visitors at the memorial, NPS photo

During WWII, thousands of men and women worked in this area everyday, in very hazardous jobs. Actively recruited by Kaiser, they came from all over the United States to swell the population of Richmond from 20,000 to over 100,000 in three short years. For many of them, this was the first time they worked and earned money. It was the first time they were faced with the problems of being working parents - finding day care and housing. As you read the quotes from the "Rosies", you will find how their lives were forever changed.

Three years before the National Park was created, the City of Richmond initiated the Rosie Memorial to celebrate this important aspect of their community's history.

The effort was initiated by then-Councilwoman Donna Powers. It grew under Project Director Donna Graves to become the first national tribute to home front American women. It became the inspiration for the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park.

The design uses abstracted forms from Liberty ships in sculptures reminiscent of the prefabricated parts assembled by shipyard workers. Meant to draw parallels between the acts of constructing ships and reconstructing memories, the Memorial's form is that of a vessel in the



Memorial dedication, October 14, 2000, NPS photo

process of being built. Sculpture, landscape elements, photographs and words combine to weave history, personal recollections and cultural memory into a work that situates women as fundamental actors in a dramatic historical period.

This Memorial is the touchstone of the National Park here in Richmond. The Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park is unique in that the National Park Service owns no properties. The structures and sites within the Park are owned by the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County or are in private ownership.

The Park's success in telling this important National story depends on partnerships and on your help and support. The City of Richmond, Contra Costa County, the non-profit organizations and private owners have made a great start and are committed to make this Park a great success. But to be successful we need the public's help and support - we need your voice. Help us realize the dream of this Park. The Rosie the Riveter Memorial was a grass roots effort by the public. Help us make sure the whole Park has the impact and quality of the Rosie the Riveter Memorial. Get involved in our planning processes and voice your ideas.

WWII Kaiser Shipyard #2

WWII Kaiser Shipyard #2 is now the park, memorial and yacht harbor before you. The four Kaiser shipyards of Richmond produced over 747 ships from 1941 to 1945, more than any other shipyard location in the United States. These shipyards operated twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

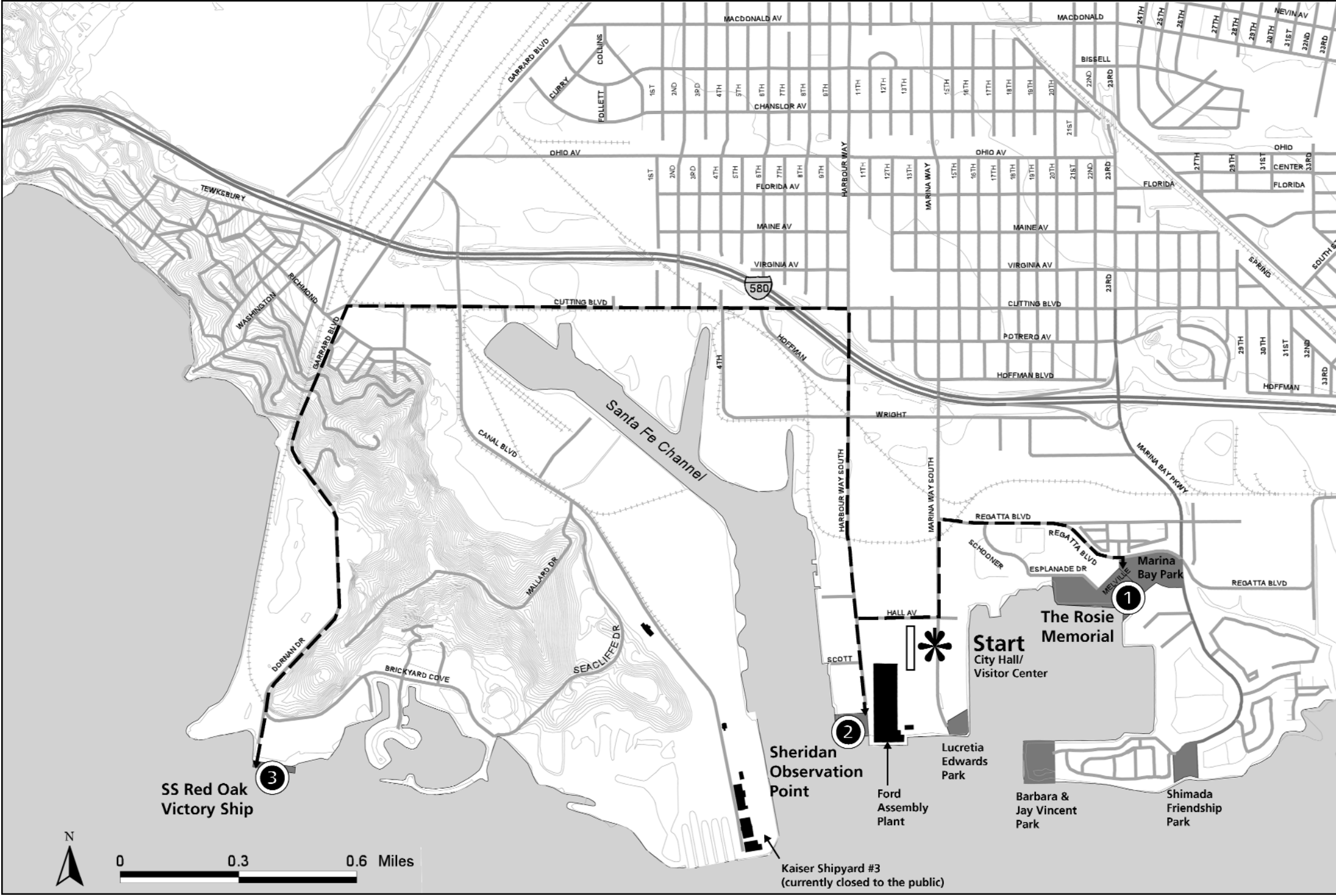


Shipyard # 2, 1942, National Archives



Shipyard # 2, today, Richmond Redevelopment Agency

★ marks the memorial location



Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front



National Historical
Park

Legend

- 1 The Rosie Memorial
- 2 Sheridan Observation Point
- 3 SS Red Oak Victory Ship
- Driving Route
- Park Sites
- Historic Structures

② Ford Assembly Building and Kaiser Shipyard #3 (Sheridan Observation Point)

DIRECTIONS:

- ☆ Exit the Marina Bay Park parking lot the way you came in.
- ☆ Turn left off Melville onto Regatta Blvd.
- ☆ Turn left onto Marina Way South.
- ☆ Turn right onto Hall Avenue.
- ☆ Turn left onto Harbor Way South and continue all the way to the end of the road and park in the lot at Sheridan Observation Point.
- ☆ As you face the water, the brick building to your left is the Ford Assembly Plant. The City of Richmond has repaired and prepared the Ford Assembly building for use. A developer has been selected and portions of the building will be accessible to the public soon. The National Park Visitor Center will relocate into this building.
- ☆ Directly across the channel to your right as you face the Bay is historic Shipyard #3, today an active Port for the City of Richmond. It is currently closed to the public while safe methods of public access are being developed.



Ford Assembly Plant, Richmond Museum of History Collection photo



Ford Assembly Building, NPS photo



Several "Rosies" provide finishing touches on WWII tank, Richmond Museum of History Collection photo

Designed by famed architect Alfred Kahn and opened in 1931, the Ford Assembly Plant produced cars until the advent of WWII. To ensure America prepared for total war by mobilizing all the industrial might of the United States, President Roosevelt banned the production of civilian automobiles during WWII. The Richmond Ford Assembly Plant switched to assembling jeeps and preparing tanks, half-tracks, armored cars and other combat vehicles for shipment overseas.

Federal military authorities and private industry began to work closely together on a scale never seen before in American history. This laid the groundwork for what became known as the "Military-Industrial Complex" during the Cold War years. This Assembly Plant was one cog in that mobilization of the "Arsenal of Democracy" and a historical part of what is today's industrial culture of the United States.

Looking across the channel, you can see some of the remaining buildings of shipyard #3. The massive square concrete building you see is the general warehouse, from which ships received their finishing touches - dishes, blankets, mops, brooms, and all the other individual pieces of furnishings and equipment needed.

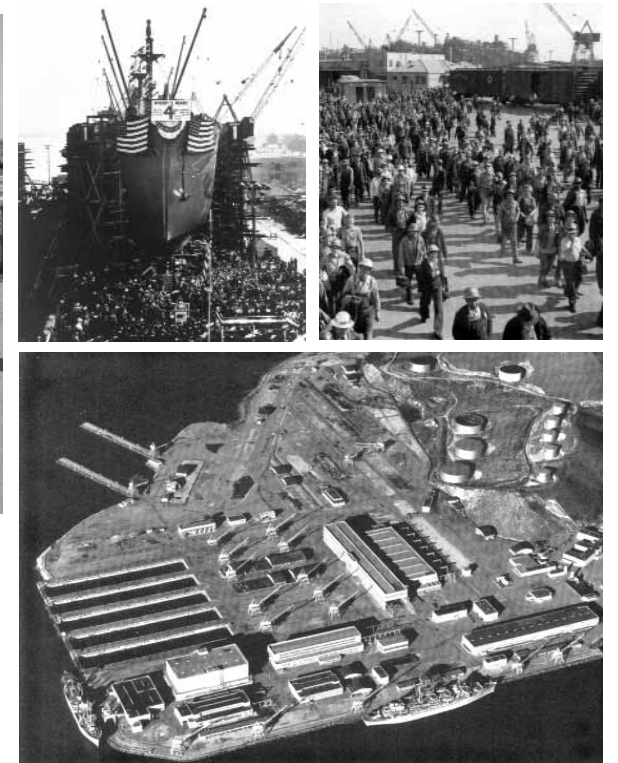
Not visible, but on the other side of general warehouse are 5 "quays" or slips, where the ships were assembled. Henry Kaiser applied mass assembly line techniques to building the ships. Over 747 ships were built here in Richmond's Kaiser Shipyards during WWII; a feat not equaled anywhere else before or since. The Victory Ship Robert E. Perry (pictured here) was assembled in less than 5 days as part of special competition among shipyards - but by 1944, it was only taking the astonishingly brief time of a little over two weeks to assemble each one!

This production line technique, bringing pre-made parts together and moving them into place with huge cranes and having them welded together by "Rosies" (actually "Wendy the Welders" here in the shipyards) allowed unskilled laborers to do repetitive jobs requiring relatively little training to accomplish. This not only increased the speed of construction but also opened up jobs to women and minorities.

Women and minorities entered the workforce in jobs before denied to them. However, they still faced unequal pay, they were shunted off into "auxiliary" unions and still had to deal with day to day prejudice and inequities. During the war, there were labor strikes and sit-down work stoppages that eventually led to better conditions. As one African American Rosie commented about the progress of labor and civil rights during this time, while huge gains had to wait for the post-war civil rights moment, the Home Front did, "begin to shed light on America's promise."



The Shiyard #3 area today, as seen from the Ford Assembly Building (above), and during WWII (top center - S.S. Robert E. Peary Liberty Ship, Richmond Museum of History Collection; top right - afternoon shift change in 1942, Oakland Museum of California - Dorothea Lange Collection; bottom right - Richmond Shipyard #3 at the end of the war, Richmond Museum of History Collection)



③ SS Red Oak Victory Ship

DIRECTIONS:

- ☆ Leave Sheridan Observation Point Park, returning up (North) onto Harbour Way.
- ☆ At Cutting Blvd, turn left and go two miles to the end of Cutting Blvd.
- ☆ Turn left onto Garrard Blvd and go through the tunnel in front of you. Garrard becomes Dornan Dr. as you leave the tunnel.
- ☆ Drive to the end of Dornan where you will see the Red Oak Victory.
- ☆ Park and go aboard the SS Red Oak Victory Ship.

The SS Red Oak Victory Ship is owned by the non-profit Richmond Museum Association. They are restoring the ship with volunteer help. A donation of \$5 per person is appreciated. Open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., closed on Mondays. Exploring the ship can take from thirty minutes to two hours. If you wish to have a guided tour (plan on two hours), please call (510) 237-2933.

Talk to the volunteers on board the ship. If you find one who served on Merchant Marine vessels, find out what that life was like. The real stories about the ship are not its length, width and storage capacity, but the stories of the people who built and sailed on them.

The SS Red Oak Victory Ship was built in Richmond Kaiser Shipyard#1. It was launched on November 9, 1944. One of the few Victory Ships to be transferred from the Merchant Marine to the US Navy, the Red Oak Victory served as an ammunition ship in the South Pacific during WWII.



www.usmm.org/reoak.html

Many Rosies recounted how important their jobs were in welding these ships and how careful they were in doing it. They realized their husbands', brothers', and sons' lives depended on the cargos delivered by these ships. Victory ships were not designed to last long - but the Red Oak Victory's welds are intact after sixty years!



Richmond Museum of History Collection

Imagine assembling this entire ship in about two weeks. Picture cranes moving huge pieces into position, welding torches arcing and sparks flying, the noise of machines, motors, the shouting, hundreds of men and women moving about, the excitement.

Think about all the things that had to happen to make this ship possible - developing new techniques of construction, moving masses of workers to coastal cities, finding housing for the thousands swelling the cities, providing day care for working mothers, establishing the new idea of pre-paid medical care to keep workers on the job, and changing societal norms to allow women and minorities into jobs denied them previously. That is the full story of the WWII Home Front.



NPS photo

Park Sites not yet open to the public

The following sites in the park are not yet open to the public and are either in private ownership and/or are still in operation. While visiting these sites is not allowed at present, they represent important stories of the WWII Home Front.

Kaiser Hospital



NPS photo

More American workers died in Home Front accidents than US soldiers killed on WWII battlefields. This was true up to the invasion of Normandy in June of 1944.

Henry J. Kaiser realized that only a healthy work force could meet the deadlines and construction needs of wartime America. He instituted a revolutionary idea, pre-paid medical care for workers, which soon expanded beyond workers. For many workers, this was the first time they had seen a doctor. Today, pre-paid medical care is central to American culture - it is a legacy of the WWII Home Front.

Maritime and Ruth Powers Child Development Centers



NPS photo

Employing cutting edge educational techniques for their time, the Maritime and Ruth Powers Child Development Centers opened during WWII and allowed mothers to join the Home Front work force. Built as temporary structures to fulfill a war time need, these centers have been in continuous operation since that time.

Day care as we know it today started in places like this. Revolutionary for its time, day care has become an accepted norm.

Atchison Village



NPS photo

The huge explosion of workers coming to live in cities like Richmond, caused intense strain on city infrastructure. One of these strains was the severe lack of housing. Workers arriving in these rapidly expanding urban centers were forced to find what they could. They slept in all night movie houses, shared "hot beds" (where three people used one bed, each getting an 8 hour stretch), or just camped out.

In response to this need, government and industry combined to construct communities all over the nation that included housing, schools, fire/police stations, child care facilities and other amenities. Atchison Village was one of them. These were highly sought after and company managers were the most likely to be able to procure housing in Atchison Village.



Oakland Museum of CA, Dorothea Lange Collection

Due to discrimination, minorities fared very poorly in gaining housing. They often lived in shacks, in the crates that brought the raw materials to the city, in trailers, or in automobiles. They and other lower income earning workers were lucky when they were able to move to barrack-like dormitories constructed for the mass of WWII workers.

Today, Atchison Village is a collection of privately owned houses managed by a cooperative of the homeowners. While most of the dormitories and other low income housing of WWII are gone, Atchison Village, built as permanent housing, remains.